

National Environmental Policy Act

A thorough understanding of environmental impacts that may occur when implementing proposed actions is a key element of Department of Energy decision-making. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) provides Federal agency decision-makers with a process to consider potential environmental consequences (beneficial and adverse) of proposed actions before agencies make decisions. An important part of this process is the opportunity for the public to learn about and comment on proposed agency actions before a decision is made.

Passed by Congress in 1969, NEPA requires Federal agencies to consider the potential environmental impacts of their proposed major actions before implementing them. If a proposed action could have a significant impact on the environment, the agency must prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Environmental Impact Statement:

A detailed environmental analysis for any proposed major Federal action that could significantly affect the quality of the human environment. A tool to assist in decision-making, it describes the positive and negative environmental effects of the proposed undertaking and alternatives. A draft EIS is issued, followed by a final EIS.

Comment Period:

A regulatory minimum 45-day period for public review of a draft EIS during which the public may comment on the environmental analyses and suggest revisions or additional issues or alternatives to be evaluated in the final EIS. The agency considers these comments in its preparation of the final EIS.

Scoping:

An early and open process in which the public is invited to participate in identifying issues and alternatives to be considered in this EIS. DOE allows a minimum of 30 days for the receipt of public comments.

Record of Decision:

A public record of the agency decision, issued no sooner than 30 days after publication of a final EIS. It describes the decision, identifies the alternatives (specifying which were considered environmentally preferable) and the factors balanced by an agency in making its decision.

Alternatives:

A range of courses of action that would meet the agency's purpose and need for action. NEPA requires that an EIS consider a No Action Alternative.

Copies of the Idaho High-Level Waste and Facilities Disposition Final Environmental Impact Statement are available at the locations listed at the end of this document. The EIS also will be available on the internet at <http://tis.eh.doe.gov/nepa/documentspub.html>.

To request a copy of this EIS, please call 1-208-526-0833 or send a note electronically to Brad Bugger at: buggerbp@id.doe.gov